

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 445-0813



May 7, 1984

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-44-84

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: HOMEFINDING AGENCY RATE-SETTING SYSTEM

Provisions of AB 2695 (Chapter 977, Statutes of 1982) require the State Department of Social Services, with the advice, assistance and cooperation of the counties and foster care providers, to develop a rate-setting system for homefinding agencies (HFAs). To assist us in meeting this mandate, the attached questionnaire has been devised to gather information on current county practices regarding HFAs and county recommendations for future rate-setting.

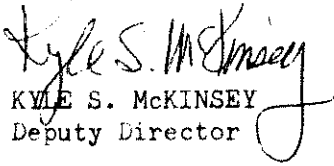
For purposes of this questionnaire, "county" means the county welfare or probation department completing the questionnaire, and the following definitions apply:

1. Exclusive Use Home means a family residence certified by a licensed homefinding agency and issued a certificate of approval by that agency as meeting licensing standards, and used exclusively by that homefinding agency for placements (EAS 45-101.1(n)).
2. Homefinding Agency means an individual or organization licensed by the department and which is engaged in finding exclusive-use homes for placement of persons of any age for temporary or permanent care, or adoption (EAS 45-101.1(u)).
3. Small Family Home means any residential facility in the licensee's family residence providing 24-hour a day care for six or fewer children who are mentally disordered, developmentally disabled or physically handicapped and who require special care and supervision as a result of such disabilities (California Administrative Code, Title 22, Section 80001 (a) (44)).
4. Specialized Care System is defined, in part, in proposed regulations (ORD Package #133-4) as: any mechanism utilized by a county to pay family homes or small family homes a rate greater than the county's basic foster care rate on behalf of an AFDC-FC child with care needs substantially greater than those of a normal foster child, because of health and/or behavior problems.

We request that you complete this questionnaire in as much detail as possible as the information you provide will help us develop a rate-setting system for HFAs. Please submit your responses by June 11, 1984 to:

Department of Social Services
Foster Care Program Management Bureau
744 P Street, M.S. 7-185
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Maureen Geiger

If you have any questions, please contact Maureen Geiger at (916) 445-0813.


KYLE S. MCKINSEY
Deputy Director

Attachment

cc: CWDA

COUNTY & AGENCY _____

NAME & TITLE OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

IF THE COUNTY DOES NOT PLACE CHILDREN WITH HFAs, PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY NOT AND GO ON TO Part IV.

PART I

1. In the past, how did the county determine rates for children placed with HFAs?

2. Did the HFA rate include a specific amount earmarked by the county for the exclusive use home?
 - a. If so, how was this specific amount determined?

3. Rates paid HFAs are generally higher than basic family home rates and county specialized care rates paid to family and state-licensed small family homes. What is the county purchasing for these additional dollars?

4. Do you think that, in general, the rates set for HFAs reflect the quality and extent of services provided by the HFA to children in foster care? Please explain.

5. Would you prefer to see rates for HFAs based on actual costs similar to group homes or based on a flat rate similar to family homes?

a. Is there another alternative which might be feasible?

6. What problems would the county have if placements through HFAs were no longer available?

a. What placement options would be available for these children?

7. Please provide your assessment of the overall strengths and weaknesses of HFAs in the foster care system.

PART II

1. For the month of April 1984, how many AFDC-FC children for whom your county has placement and care responsibility and who were placed by an HFA resided in:
- a. an exclusive use home _____?
 - b. a state or county-licensed family home _____?
 - c. a licensed group home _____?

2. For an individual child, which factors determine whether the county places the child with an HFA as opposed to a family home or group home?

- a. Who decides when a child is placed with an HFA - the placement worker only? the supervisor? a placement screening committee? other?
- b. Under what circumstances would you refer a well child (as opposed to a special needs child) to an HFA?

3. Assume a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being a well child with no special needs and 5 being a severely emotionally disturbed child, one step from needing state hospitalization. In what range(s) would you categorize the children served by each HFA used by your county? (You may specify more than one number, e.g., 1-2, 4-5, etc.)

<u>Name of HFA</u>	<u>Range(s)</u>	<u>Name of HFA</u>	<u>Range(s)</u>

4. Were any of the HFA programs used by your county developed at the county's request, e.g., as a result of a Request for Proposal (RFP)?

- a. If yes, please explain why this approach was taken.

5. HFAs occasionally place children in licensed family homes rather than in exclusive-use homes. Since the county also has access to these licensed homes, under what circumstances would this occur?
 - a. In this situation, would the HFA receive the same rate as for a child placed by the HFA in an exclusive-use home?
6. Many agencies with a homefinding agency license also have a license for one or more group homes. Some children referred to the HFA are first placed in an affiliated group home and later transferred to the HFA's exclusive-use home. For what type of child would you seek this arrangement?
 - a. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages for the child?
 - b. What are the advantages and/or disadvantages for the county?
 - c. Does the county or the HFA make the decision to move the child from the group home to the exclusive-use home?
 - d. In this situation, is the county-agency placement agreement with the HFA or the group home?

7. HFAs are required by licensing regulations (Title 22, Section 89173) to provide social worker supervision and, when needed, psychological study and treatment. Except in cases where a prerelinquished child is accepted for voluntary placement or a child is relinquished to an agency which has both an HFA license and an adoption agency license, the county, rather than the HFA, is responsible for placement and care of an AFDC-FC child and is required by EAS 45-201.4 to provide certain services for AFDC-FC eligibility. What services are provided by HFAs in addition to those required by Title 22 and EAS Manual Section 45-201.4?
8. When an HFA program offers additional counseling and treatment services, does this influence the county's decision to refer children to that HFA? Please explain.
9. Does your county provide courtesy supervision for children placed in exclusive-use homes in your county by HFAs headquartered in other counties?
 - a. If so, does this courtesy supervision cause any problems?

PART III

1. Does the county currently have a specialized care system?
 - a. If yes, please explain what relationship, if any, exists between the county's specialized care rate and the rate paid to homefinding agencies used by your county.
 - b. Since both specialized care systems and HFAs deal with special needs children, do you think such a relationship should exist? Please explain.

2. Does the county have access to placements for special needs children in state-licensed small family homes?
 - a. If so, under what circumstances would you refer a special needs child to an HFA?
3. If the county has no specialized care system and does not place children in state-licensed small family homes, would you say the placement needs of special needs children are met by HFAs in your county?
4. If the county has the option of placing a special needs child in a state-licensed small family home or of referring the child to an HFA for exclusive-use home placement, what factors would influence this decision?

PART IV (To be completed by counties which do not place children with HFAs.)

1. Does the county currently have a specialized care system?
2. Does the county have access to placements for special needs children in state-licensed small family homes?
3. If the county has no specialized care system, does not place children with HFAs or in state-licensed small family homes, how are the placement needs of special needs children met by the county?